

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the thoroughness with which the Examiner has examined the above-identified application. Reconsideration is requested in view of the amendments above and the remarks below.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has objected to claims 4-7, 12-13, and 15-29 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would allow these claims if rewritten in independent form including all the limitation of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants have cancelled claim 4, and rewritten claim 1 to incorporate all the limitations of claim 4. As such, applicants submit that claims 2-3 and 8-10, dependent upon claim 1, are now in a condition for allowance. Applicants have further amended claims 5 and 6, originally dependent upon claim 4, to now be dependent upon newly amended claim 1.

Applicants have cancelled claim 12, and rewritten claim 11 to incorporate all the limitations of claim 12. As such, applicants submit that claim 14, dependent upon claim 11, is now in a condition for allowance. Applicants have further amended claim 13, originally dependent upon claim 12, to now be dependent upon newly amended claim 11.

The Examiner has allowed claims 15, 21, 22 and 27, which were each dependent upon claim 1. Applicants have rewritten claims 15, 21, 22 and 27 as independent claims. Applicants submit that these claims are now in a condition for allowance.

Claim objections

The Examiner has objected to the claim numbers, stating that the claims are not numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals. Specifically, applicants numbered the claims consecutively with a "c" in front of each number, and enclosed the c# in brackets, e.g., "[c10]". Applicants submit a new set of claims herewith, correcting the claim numbering removing the "c" and the brackets.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-3, 8-11 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Adams, et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 20020124053). Applicants respectfully submit that the above-identified claims amendments address these rejections in a manner that makes the claimed invention patentably distinct over the cited prior art of Adams.

It is respectfully submitted that the application has now been brought into a condition where allowance of the entire case is proper. Reconsideration and issuance of a notice of allowance are respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "R. Curcio", is written over a horizontal line.

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